Introduction

The meeting was brought to session with a brief introduction of what eportfolios are and how they will be used at the university. There was some argument about what eportfolios were actually for, i.e. we should not get bogged down in the technology but should see its applications for supporting institution-wide portfolios for assessment. The chair of WRSC pointed out that we have the opportunity to take our time and create a comprehensive plan that covers our plans for assessment to be reached by 2010. It was noted that eportfolios provide the opportunity for thoughtful reflections rather than just a tool to display completed assignments. Eportfolios will be used as a tool for continuous improvement in teaching, as well as a tool for measuring student learning outcomes, and as a tool for a student’s career development. Many more permutations may be created, but these three categories will be the main focus of the Eportfolio project.

Today’s meeting marks the beginning of coordinating all three separate models. All three models will be used as evidence of development for WASC as well as an overall institutional indicator for teaching effectiveness and student success.

Teaching Eportfolios

Doug Cremer, Paul Decker, and Randy Stauffer will lead the Teaching Eportfolio Learning Community. There were several factors discussed regarding the advantages of the teaching eportfolio. The content and process of creating the portfolio was discussed to be the most important factor, with the technological aspect being more of a tool rather than the main focus for successful implementation. Eportfolios can be easily managed and can have many permutations for a single user. The content can stay the same, but through the use of eportfolios they can be displayed in various ways with different levels of access and scaffolding. A pilot process was discussed involving 10-12 faculty members. The problem of getting adjuncts to buy-in to the process was also discussed. It was determined that the eportfolio would follow many of the same guidelines already in place for faculty retention and promotion, but the end result would be that reflection and continuous improvement of successful teaching would be embedded into the process of creating a portfolio.

Student Eportfolios

The student eportfolio project was discussed as being in the beginning stages of development with one meeting under the belt of the FLC members. The members thus far include Ilene Blaisch, Monica Pecot, Claudia Campos, and Rich Matzen. Student eportfolios are divided into two categories: career development and academic. Several options were discussed, including integration into OR 100, piloting the project in a course that already involves portfolios, integration into writing and information literacy courses, and using the model of Washington State University. The need of following best
practices and the need for research and data was also discussed. It was also discussed whether or not outside consultants would be desirable before fully implementing eportfolio projects.

Conclusion

It was concluded that this process was going to take a long time and careful planning and decision-making should be seen as essential rather than creating a shoddy product created in haste. It was also concluded that the technological aspect is simply a means for implementation rather than an end in itself.